

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 499
By Henry

A RESOLUTION to recognize the Honorable Frank F. Drowota III,
Chief Justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court,
on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those outstanding citizens and consummate jurists who, in their years of service, have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm; and

WHEREAS, Frank F. Drowota III is one such estimable person who has served with distinction for 25 years on the Tennessee Supreme Court as an Associate Justice, and as Chief Justice from February 1, 1989 – September 1990, and from September 2001 to the present; and

WHEREAS, Chief Justice Drowota will be taking a much deserved retirement on September 2 of this year; during his remarkable career he has participated in a variety of cases, including such diverse subjects as frozen embryos, drunken driving, and teachers' pay, and has seen the Court broadcast proceedings live on the internet during a controversial lawsuit concerning municipal incorporations, know as the "tiny towns" lawsuit; and

WHEREAS, born July 7, 1938, in Williamsburg, Kentucky, to Frank F. Drowota, Jr. and the late Vivian Russell Drowota, Frank III moved with his family to Tennessee in 1943; he attended the Davidson County Public Schools for his elementary education and graduated from Montgomery Bell Academy in 1956 as a member of the Cum Laude Society. He entered Vanderbilt University where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in 1960 and a J.D. degree in 1965; and

WHEREAS, in the interval, between earning an undergraduate degree and entering law school, Frank Drowota served as a Naval Officer aboard the USS Shangri-La, (CVA-38), an aircraft carrier assigned to the Sixth Fleet, from 1960-62; a Commander in the United States

Naval Reserve, he was Commanding Officer of his local reserve unit, retiring after 27 years of military service; and

WHEREAS, Frank Drowota practiced law with the firm of Goodpasture, Carpenter, Woods and Sasser in Nashville from 1965-70, when then Governor Buford Ellington appointed him Chancellor of the Seventh Chancery District; in 1974, then Governor Winfield Dunn appointed him to the State Court of Appeals, where he served until his first election to the State Supreme Court in 1980; and

WHEREAS, Chief Justice Drowota, by virtue of his office, is Chairman of the Tennessee Code Commission, the Tennessee Law Library Commission, and the Tennessee Supreme Court Building Commission; he served as President of the Tennessee Judicial Conference in 1979-80, Vice-President in 1976-77, Treasurer in 1973-74 and as a member of the Executive Committee in 1973, 1974, and 1976-81; and

WHEREAS, Chief Justice Drowota has served astutely as Chairman of the Education, Orientation, Community Relations and Judicial Administration Committees of the Tennessee Judicial Conference, and has served on the Tennessee Court Executive Team; as a member of the Commission on the Future of Tennessee's Judicial System; and as Supreme Court Liaison with the Civil and Appellate Rules Commission, the Tennessee Client Protection Fund, and the Commission on Continuing Legal Education; and

WHEREAS, a conscientious member of his profession, Chief Justice Drowota is a member of the American, Tennessee and Nashville Bar Associations; is a charter member of the Tennessee Lawyers' Association for Women; was a member of the Tennessee Bar Association's Board of Governors from 1979-80; and is a member of the Judicial Planning Commission and the American Judicature Society. He has been a guest speaker and lecturer at Vanderbilt Law School, Nashville School of Law, Cumberland University, the Tennessee Bar Association, the Tennessee Trial Lawyers' Association and the Tennessee Criminal Defense Lawyers' Association seminars; and is a Fellow of the Tennessee Bar Foundation, the Nashville Bar Foundation, the American Bar Foundation and the American Law Institute; and

WHEREAS, Chief Justice Drowota is an active and important part of his community, participating in numerous worthy organizations, including having served as President of the Nashville Area Chapter of the American Red Cross; a member of the Executive Committee of

the State Division of the ARC; Past President of the Nashville Rotary Club; a Paul Harris Fellow of the Rotary Foundation; Trustee and First Vice-President of the Cumberland Museum and Science Center; a member of the Board of Directors of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, Tennessee Girls' Ranch, the Children's House, Opportunity House, Bill Wilkerson Speech and Hearing Center, Disciples Divinity House, and the YMCA of Nashville and Middle Tennessee; Past President of Montgomery Bell Academy Alumni Association; Committeeman for Post 65 of the Boy Scouts of America; a member of the Advisory Board for Operation Chemical Awareness in Nashville; a trustee of the Dantzler Bond Ansley Foundation and a Trustee of the HCA Foundation; and

WHEREAS, Frank Drowota's commitment to excellence has been manifest throughout his life; he was the co-recipient with Grantland Rice (posthumous) of Montgomery Bell Academy's First Distinguished Alumni Award in 1992, was the recipient of the 1993 YMCA Chairman's Leadership Award, the Tennessee Judicial Conference Service Award, the Middle Tennessee Chapter of American Red Cross Service Award, the YMCA Chairman's Round Table, member of the Fountain Society of Senior Citizens, Cumberland Valley Girl Scouts Golden Cookie Award, Washington Marine Corps Marathon in 1986, first recipient of Fellows of Tennessee Young Lawyers Conference in 1991, and the recipient of a 98.4 percent approval rating from the Nashville Bar Association's Judicial Endorsement Poll, the highest rating ever received by a judge; and

WHEREAS, Chief Justice Drowota is a committed and active member of Woodmont Christian Church, where he serves as Elder, member of the Official Board, Chairman of the Christian Education Division, and Sunday school teacher, as well as having served for six years as the High School Youth Group Sponsor; his father was pastor of Woodmont Christian Church for 30 years before his retirement; and

WHEREAS, Chief Justice Drowota exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; he enjoys the love and support of his wife, Claire Hooper Drowota; they are the proud parents of two children and the doting grandparents of five grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career, Frank Drowota has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of his

colleagues in the judiciary, Tennessee's legal community and of the citizenry of this State; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we extend to Chief Justice Frank F. Drowota, III our profound thanks for the great service he has rendered to this State and our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement and every continued success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.